

Amendments to the Claims:

Please cancel claims 1-11 and 13-19 without prejudice or disclaimer. Please add new claims 23-38 and amend claims 20 and 21, as set forth in the below listing of the claims. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-19. (Canceled)

20. (Currently Amended) A method to support dental patient scheduling relating to one or more dental appliances, comprising:

providing a server ~~configured to communicate~~ transmitting via a network information relating to a manufacturing stage of ~~a dental appliance~~ one or more dental appliances, the network coupled to one or more patient computers;

accessing a database having information regarding manufacturing progress of the one or more dental appliances;

determining whether the manufacturing progress has reached a predetermined stage;

automatically ~~communicating~~ transmitting manufacturing progress information ~~with to a~~ patient computer over a wide area network in the absence of the patient prompting the server to communicate the manufacturing progress information, the transmitting occurring prior to completion of all manufacturing operations for each of the appliances; and

performing patient scheduling when one or more dental appliances reach a predetermined manufacturing progress, patient scheduling occurring prior to completion of all manufacturing operations for each of the appliances.

21. (Currently Amended) A system adapted to support dental patient scheduling, the system comprising:

a server ~~that configured to automatically communicate~~ transmits via a network information relating to a manufacturing stage of ~~a dental appliance~~ one or more dental appliances, the network coupled to one or more patient computers, the server comprising a storage media having ~~instruction~~ instructions that if executed cause the server to:

- access a database having information regarding manufacturing progress of the one or more dental appliance appliances;
- determine whether the manufacturing progress has reached a predetermined stage;
- automatically ~~communicate~~ transmit manufacturing progress information to a patient computer in the absence of the patient prompting the server to ~~communicate~~ transmit the manufacturing progress information, the transmitting occurring prior to completion of all manufacturing operations for each of the appliances; and
- perform patient scheduling when the one or more dental appliances has reached the predetermined stage, patient scheduling occurring prior to completion of all manufacturing operations for each of the appliances.

22. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 21, wherein the network is further coupled to one or more treating professional computers.
23. (New) The system of claim 21, wherein the server sends a message to a patient when the appliances reach a predetermined manufacturing stage.
24. (New) The system of claim 21, wherein the server sends a message to a patient when the appliances are being marked.
25. (New) The system of claim 21, wherein the server sends a message to a treating professional when the appliances reach one or more intermediate stages of manufacturing.

26. (New) The system of claim 21, wherein the server sends an electronic mail message to transmit information relating to manufacturing progress.

27. (New) The system of claim 21, wherein the server maintains calendar pages for the treating professionals.

28. (New) The system of claim 21, wherein the server invites a patient to access an on-line calendar and schedule an appointment when the appliances reach the last stage of manufacturing.

29. (New) The system of claim 21, further comprising a network of treating professionals coupled to the network.

30. (New) The system of claim 21, wherein the server transmits a request for intervention from manufacturing personnel when one or more manufacturing stages fall behind schedule.

31. (New) The system of claim 30, wherein the server is configured to update the patient with information relating to a delay caused by manufacturing slippage.

32. (New) The method of claim 20, wherein the server sends a message to a patient when the appliances are being marked.

33. (New) The method of claim 20, wherein the server sends a message to the treating professional computer when the appliances reach one or more manufacturing stages.

34. (New) The method of claim 20, wherein the server sends an electronic mail message conveying information relating to manufacturing progress.

35. (New) The method of claim 20, wherein the server maintains an on-line calendar to schedule appointments with a patient.

36. (New) The method of claim 20, wherein the server invites a patient to log-on and schedule an appointment when the appliances reach a predetermined manufacturing stage.

37. (New) The method of claim 20, wherein the treating professionals include dentists or orthodontists.

38. (New) The method of claim 20, wherein the treating professionals perform office management operations using the server.